

Message Text

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TAGS:GEN, ENRG, US, UR

SUBJ: US-USSR ENERGY AGREEMENT: MHD:SHIPMENT OF SCMS
(08.0208)

1. ERDA HAS INFORMED DEPARTMENT THAT CORRESPONDENT FOR US
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PUBLICATION #AVIATION WEEK" LEARNED OF US PLAN TO FLY SUPER-
CONDUCTING MAGNET TO USSR ON C-5 AIRCRAFT. WHEN QUERIED ON
SUBJECT BY "AVIATION WEEK" ERDA RESPONDED BY STATING THAT
SUCH A POSSIBILITY HAS BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION WITH THE USSR
BUT THAT NO FINAL DECISION HAS BEEN MADE.

2. ERDA HAS LEARNED ADDITIONALLY THAT APRIL 25 ISSUE OF

"AVIATION WEEK" WILL CARRY ARTICLE ON MAGNET SHIPMENT. ARTICLE IS EXPECTED TO BE BRIEF AND TO STATE ONLY THAT USG IS CONTEMPLATING FLYING VERY LARGE MAGNET TO USSR PURSUANT TO US-USSR ENERGY AGREEMENT ON C-5 AIRCRAFT AND THAT SUCH AN AIRCRAFT HAS NEVER BEEN FLOWN TO USSR BEFORE.

3. DEPARTMENT AND ERDA REGRET THAT STORY MAY BREAK BEFORE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS COMPLETED. WE HAVE PREPARED FOLLOWING CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE FOR USE ONLY IN EVENT EMBASSY OR DEPARTMENT IS QUERIED REGARDING SHIPMENT ON C-5 TO MOSCOW:

Q. IS ERDA PLANNING TO SHIP A LARGE MAGNET TO THE SOVIET

UNION FOR TESTING IN THEIR MHD FACILITY?

A. YES. THE US AND USSR BEGAN COOPERATING ACTIVELY IN THE FIELD OF MAGNETOHYDRODYNAMICS (MHD) IN JULY OF 1973 AND CONTINUE TO PURSUE SUCH COOPERATION UNDER THE US-USSR ENERGY AGREEMENT OF 1974 WITH ERDA ACTING AS THE US LEAD AGENCY. AS PART OF THE JOINT PROGRAM, IT IS TENTATIVELY PLANNED THAT A LARGE US MAGNET BE TESTED AT THE SOVIET UNION'S UNIQUE MHD FACILITY OUTSIDE MOSCOW.

Q. WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THIS PROJECT?

A. PLANS FOR THE MAGNET'S SHIPMENT ARE NOT YET FINAL. THE MAGNET ITSELF IS NOT YET READY. CERTAIN TECHNICAL HURDLES REMAIN SUCH AS COOLING THE MAGNET, TESTING ITS PERFORMANCE, AND COMPLETING AN ANALYSIS OF THE PHYSICAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STRAINS IT MAY ENCOUNTER DURING TRANSPORT. ALSO, FORMAL ARRANGEMENTS STILL HAVE TO BE COMPLETED WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

Q. HOW WILL TESTING OF THE US MAGNET IN THE SOVIET MHD FACILITY BENEFIT THE US?

A. IN THE 1960'S THE US EFFORT IN MHD DEVELOPMENT WAS SHARPLY REDUCED. AS A RESULT THE SOVIET UNION HAS BUILT, WHILE WE HAVE NOT, A MAJOR MHD PILOT INSTALLATION. BY TESTING US EQUIPMENT (INCLUDING THE MAGNET) AT THE SOVIET PLANT, WE ARE ABLE TO OBTAIN ENGINEERING DATA AND EXPERIENCE IN MHD MORE QUICKLY AND CHEAPLY THAN IF WE HAD TO DUPLICATE SUCH A FACILITY IN THE US. THIS DATA IS CRITICALLY NEEDED AS INPUT FOR DESIGN OF PLANNED FUTURE US MHD INSTALLATIONS.

Q. DO YOU PLAN TO USE AIR FORCE C-5 AIRCRAFT TO TRANSPORT THE MAGNET?

A. THE C-5 IS THE ONLY AIRCRAFT CAPABLE OF TRANSPORTING AN
OBJECT WITH THE BULK AND WEIGHT OF THE MHD MAGNET AND
THEREFORE SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT IS NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION.

4. AT ITS DISCRETION, EMBASSY MAY INFORM DEPUTY MINISTER
OF POWER LOPATIN THAT THE STORY MAY BREAK AND THAT IF IT
DOES WE PLAN TO RESPOND FACTUALLY ALONG ABOVE LINES.
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